



The United States Army Field Band

The Musical Ambassadors of the Army
Washington, DC

JADB bio
July 24, 2007
Word count: 532

THE JAZZ AMBASSADORS DIXIELAND BAND

The Jazz Ambassadors Dixieland Band performs jazz in the tradition of its earliest eras. Virtually all Jazz Ambassadors concerts feature this dynamic seven-piece group, sharing music in the styles of the great King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, and Bix Beiderbecke bands. While on tour, the ensemble occasionally performs separate concerts at VA Hospitals and Veteran Centers, and performed live on “Good Morning America” on July 4, 2007. On all occasions, the Jazz Ambassadors Dixieland Band fosters enthusiasm and appreciation for America’s original art form.

Sergeant First Class Jeff Adams, trombone, is a native of Hemet, California. SFC Adams has extensive experience in pit orchestras, and has worked with Lou Rawls, Tony Bennett, Kenny Rogers, Frankie Vallie, the Four Tops, and Mary Wilson. SFC Adams earned a M.M.E. from the University of Redlands and a B.M. in Commercial Music from California State University at Long Beach, and attended the Berklee College of Music.

Sergeant First Class Michael Johnston, trumpet, is the Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge of the Dixieland Band. He earned a B.A. at the University of North Florida. He has been a featured soloist with the Jazz Ambassadors and the Concert Band, and has performed with Harry Connick Jr., Clark Terry, Dizzy Gillespie, Della Reese, Dave Brubeck, the Count Basie Orchestra, and the St. Johns River City Brass Band. SFC Johnston is a native of Denver, Colorado.

Sergeant First Class Jeffrey Lopez, bass, hails from Staten Island, New York. He earned a M.M. at the Manhattan School of Music and a B.M. at the Berklee College of Music. He also composes and arranges for the Jazz Ambassadors. SFC Lopez has performed with Kenny Werner, Dave Douglas, Craig Handy, Rick Margitza, Rita Moreno and others.

Sergeant First Class Timothy Young, keyboard, received a M.M. in Jazz Studies at the University of North Texas and a B.M. at Shenandoah University. A native of Newport News, Virginia, he works as a freelance pianist in the Washington D.C. area, and has performed with Ray Anderson, Charles McPhearson, Steve Swallow, Doc Cheatham, and Rebecca Parris.

Staff Sergeant Michael Bravin, lead trombone, performed for four years with Electric Brigade of The United States Naval Academy Band before joining the Field Band in 2005. A native of Tulare, California, he studied at the University of North Texas and won the 1999 Eastern Trombone Workshop Jazz Competition. SSG Bravin has performed with the Guy Lombardo Orchestra, Maynard Ferguson, Dizzy Gillespie, and Debbie Reynolds.

Staff Sergeant Todd Harrison, drums, has performed with Kirk Whalum, Bill Watrous, Marvin Stamm, Clark Terry, and Paul Gilbert. He studied composition at San Jacinto Junior College and percussion performance at Houston Baptist University. He calls Houston, Texas, home.

Staff Sergeant Stephen Lesche, banjo, joined the Jazz Ambassadors in 2005 as a guitarist. A native of Orlando, Florida, he holds degrees from Northwestern University and the University of North Florida. He is a three-time winner of the DownBeat Magazine Student Music Award. His teachers include Don Owens, Joan Hickey, and Kevin Bales. SSG Lesche has performed with Larry Elgart, Ira Sullivan, and the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra.

Staff Sergeant Patrick Shook, clarinet, hails from Colbert, Washington and plays tenor saxophone with the Jazz Ambassadors. He holds a B.M. from the University of Idaho and a M.M. from the University of North Texas.